the the Zemi-Nagas, the Cachares and the Kukis. But after the period of economic prosperity as I shall describe in the next section, the Jaintiya people reached a rather high level of education, while most of the neighbouring tribes remained illiterate. Their standard of living likewise improved. Fashionable girls of Jaintiya who have studied at the Convent school in Shillong, and speak English and Hindi, cannot marry half-naked tribesmen who work in the jungle. They prefer to intermarry with Khasis, Panjabis or Bengalees who belong to more sophisticated community, and through whom they can enjoy urban life. Thus the orientation of the intermarriage of the people of Jaintiya has changed, along with the growth of Jaintiya.

It should be noted that intermarriages come mostly through the contacts at Shillong, where people used to go once a week for the bazaar, rather than through direct contacts with neighbouring villages.

Economy of Jaintiya and its Relation to Neighbouring Tribes

It is very interesting to find two different kinds of economy in the same ecological background. Jaintiya Khasi practise pan-leaf and orange cultivation and depend mainly on a trading economy, while the other neighbouring tribal people practise jhum cultivation, almost a subsistence economy. This situation has remained unchanged for the last fifty years since the establishment of Jaintiya village.

The first Jaintiya immigrants occupied one ridge of the mountain where the present Jaintiya is situated. Formerly, this land belonged to the Zemi-Naga, one of the old inhabitants of the Cachar Hills, who possessed a vast jungle area for jhum cultivation. It seems that there was no objection to the Khasi occupying this small spot; it was apparently too small an area for the jhum cultivation —pan-leaf cultivation of the Khasi requires less than one twentieth of the land of the usual jhum cultivation. The Khasi who started pan-leaf cultivation were able to accumulate some capital, and after several years they started orange gardens. They had had experience of orange cultivation in their homeland, but this was the first time they had operated commercially.

The success of this orange cultivation was beyond their dreams. Hearing of good oranges at Jaintiya, many Bengalee merchants from Dacca, Sylhet, Silchar and Gauhati began to come to buy them. Moreover, the village had the great advantage of being situated near the railway station. Oranges were sold by carloads. Unimaginable wealth came to the Jaintiya people. Especially the founder's family, including his brother's and sister's, became extraordinarily wealthy; their income used to be Rs. 40,000 a year. The children were sent to the school which was established in the village and some were educated at colleges in Dacca, Sylhet and Shillong. The villagers had beautiful houses built by Manipuri and Bengalee carpenters. Actually the houses of Jaintiya were known as some of the best construction in Assam.

Like the Shella people, they were managers of gardens and employed workers. Wealthy households used to engage several labourers annually, most of them from Jaintia where the Jaintiya people had originated. These workers were provided with shelter in the servant quarters of their employer's house, but they had to provide meals for themselves. They were paid daily according to the work done. They were available to other households, when their employer had no work. Some labourers were also engaged locally among the Zemi-Naga, the Cachares and the Kuki, though not as many as among the Jaintia. These local tribes were fairly well occupied by their jhum cultivation, and not used to being employed as workers. Therefore, most of them were not regular